

WOMT Summary for 7/1/2008:

Data from Survey 8 of the 20 mm Survey and Survey 2 of the Summer Townet Survey suggest that the majority of delta and longfin smelt are near the confluence or at the west end of Sherman Island, with a smaller population of delta smelt up near Cache Slough. No delta or longfin smelt were detected at southern Delta sampling stations in either survey.

Also, Delta smelt salvage densities have been relatively low for the past week at the SWP and have been zero at the CVP for the last ten days. There have been no longfin smelt in salvage at the SWP since June 10 or at CVP since May 30.

The Smelt Working Group recommended that the Projects maintain the 7-day average combined OMR flow more positive than -2,000 cfs unless: 1) average salvage over any two consecutive days reaches or exceeds 40 delta smelt per thousand acre feet (TAF) exported (ds/TAF), 2) average salvage over a three-day period reaches or exceeds 30 ds/TAF, or 3) the model-estimated daily OMR flow for any single day goes more negative than -2,500 cfs. If any of the above three conditions is met, then the Working Group recommends that the water export facilities immediately start operating to an OMR flow no more negative than -1,500 cfs. The Working Group would then meet to review any new data and discuss the recommendation. The SWG also recommended that the agricultural barriers' flapgates be kept open.

Due to the change in the Delta Outflows standard to 4,000 cfs, and concerns related to low point this year, and the Governor's emergency declaration, the water projects plan to ramp up exports at a rate of about 1,000 cfs/day to a combined export rate of about 6,000 cfs over the next week while monitoring salvage at both plants and expecting salvage of fish from Delta channels not to increase dramatically. Due to the increase in exports and possible impacts on water levels, the water projects see the need to untie the Temporary Barrier flapgates and make them operational. After some discussion, WOMT decided that the flapgates at the Middle River barrier may be closed to improve water levels, but the flapgates at Old River Tracy barrier are to be kept open this week. The Projects will monitor south Delta water levels. If water level issues develop, the Projects will contact the fish agencies and consult with the fish agencies regarding possible changes in flapgate operations at that time. The USFWS determined that the above operations would be adequately protective of delta smelt; DFG determined that this would also be protective of long fin smelt.